

I've grown up on a farm with the closest neighbor one and a half miles down the road. I have attended a public school that has endured a startling decrease in the student body of 100 to 34 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. I ask myself if I have been sheltered and deprived—or fortunately been forced to dig into the soil where I've found what really matters?

Butte, North Dakota. It has a population of a dwindling number of 129 people, but it is a place of great happiness and memories for many. Art Meller, 93 years young has never lived anywhere else. He remembers when the old people used to call Butte, "the little world all by itself." Butte was founded as Dogden in 1906. Since then the cornerstone, and the town's greatest asset, has been the school.

I'll never forget that first day of kindergarten when I walked into school and met my nine classmates. Now, I will finish my senior high school with only one classmate. We are excited for the typical reasons just like any other senior, but there is something that is unique about our class. Not only are we the only two seniors, but also we will be the last graduating class of Butte Public School. The cornerstone of Butte will be closing its doors. "It's sad to see Butte School end because when the school closes, the town closes," said Matthew, one of seven juniors. It is sad, and everyday as I drive down Main Street, the only paved street in town, I gaze at the sights—the Café, the grocery store, the Farmer's Union, and the small town bar—that have given me hope.

On a normal day I hear the sounds of wind blowing, children playing outside, and the murmur of people talking. It's not the sounds of loud sirens, or construction machinery, or traffic jams. It is simply, for the most part, a safe and comforting environment—"the little world all by itself." People living only an hour away haven't heard, or even know that a town named Butte, North Dakota exists.

Every morning I drive down the four blocks of Main Street to school, and every morning I slow down as two elderly women cross the street. They are on their daily walk to the Butte Post Office and then to the Café for a cup of coffee. Oh, and don't forget the small town gossip. It's the chatter of figuring out all 129 people's lives in Butte. When the town is so small, shouldn't everybody know everything? It's a different life, "the little world all by itself."

As I walk in the school doors there are no metal detectors, no locks on lockers, just the smiles and solemn faces of the small student body ready to put in another day at Butte school, knowing that there won't be many more at Butte. We aren't about violence or competition. Students have developed cherished friendships. We are proof that school isn't all crime and violence. It isn't a scary place. The wonder of "will a bomb blow up today?" isn't a thought. It's a place where every student shares the common bond of simple pleasures: seeing deer running in the open country, or not having to worry about locking the doors or turning on the alarm system. Everybody has gone outside at night and been able to enjoy the bright, shining stars.

The little town of Butte, North Dakota is the positive evidence that the small, trustworthy, and simple lifestyle has been dug up and still exists. Don't lose heart. Pick up your shovel and start digging deep.●

SHITAMA MANZO SENSEI AND TAKAKI MASANORI SENSEI

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of Shitama

Manzo Sensei and Takaki Masanori Sensei of the Seikiryukan Dojo upon the occasion of their visit to the United States. As the 16th headmaster of Sосуishi-ryu Jujutsu and kancho of the Seikiryukan, Shitama Manzo Sensei with the aid of Takaki Masanori Sensei, chief instructor of the Seikiryukan, have provided exemplary leadership and dedication in their oversight of the instruction of Jujutsu and Judo for many years.

The Seikiryukan Dojo has a history dating back centuries as the bombu of Sосуishi-ryu Jujutsu. It is dedicated to the ethical and physical principles that compose the martial arts of Jujutsu and Judo and was one of the first martial arts schools in Japan to teach the United States Military Jujutsu and Judo.

Shitama Manzo Sensei and Takaki Masanori have given much of their time and energy working for the betterment of others. I am appreciative of the opportunity to recognize men of such charter and conviction who work at teaching other their honorable ways.●

THE FALL OF SAIGON

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, on Sunday, the anniversary of the fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam conflict, the Washington Post carried on its Op-Ed page a thoughtful, healing reflection on those events by Senator KERREY entitled, "Was It Worth It?" A hero—and casualty—of that conflict, the only Member of Congress ever to have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, he might understandably have turned his attention to those who did not think so and did not serve. Instead he allowed that for a period he had shared the same doubts, but had overcome them. As he contemplates the human destruction done by the dictatorship that followed, he concludes: "I believe the cause was just and the sacrifice not in vain." He is now, as he was then, a person of limitless courage.

I ask that his article be included in the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 30, 2000]

WAS IT WORTH IT?

(By Bob Kerrey)

The most difficult war of the last century was not Vietnam; it was World War I. In 1943, the year I was born, veterans of the Great War Were remembering the 25th anniversary of their armistice while their sons were fighting in Italy and the Pacific against enemies whose military strength was ignored on account of the bitter memories of the failures of the First World War.

So, as I remember April 30, 1975, I will also remember Nov. 11, 1918, and what happened when America isolated itself from the world. But I will also remember the pride I felt when I sat in joint sessions of Congress listening to Vaclav Havel, Kim Dae Jung, Lech Walesa and Nelson Mandela thank Americans for the sacrifices they made on behalf of their freedom.

The famous photo of South Vietnamese ascending a stairway to a helicopter on the roof of our Saigon embassy represents both our shame and our honor. The shame is that

we, in the end, turned our back on Vietnam and on the sacrifice of more than 58,000 Americans. We succumbed to fatigue and self-doubt, we went back on the promise we had made to support the South Vietnamese, and the Communists were able to defeat our allies. The honor is that during the fall of Saigon, we rescued tens of thousands of our South Vietnamese friends, and in the years that followed we welcomed more than a million additional Vietnamese to our shores.

For a young, college-educated son of the optimistic American heartland, the war taught some valuable lessons. My trip to Vietnam gave me a sense of the immense size and variety of our world. I was also awed by something that still moves me: that Americans would risk their lives for the freedom of another people. At the Philadelphia Naval Hospital I learned that everyone needs America's generosity—even me.

During the war, I knew the fight for freedom was the core reason for our being in Vietnam. But after the war, as I learned more about our government's decision-making in the war years, I became angry. I was angry at the failure of our leaders to tell the truth about what was happening in Vietnam. I was angry at their ignorance about the motives of our North Vietnamese adversaries and the history of Vietnam.

Our leaders didn't seem to understand the depth of commitment of our adversaries to creating their version of an independent Vietnam. I particularly detested President Nixon for his duplicity in campaigning on a promise to end the war and then, once in office, broadening the war to Cambodia. But time has taught me the sterility of anger. So, as I recently told former secretary of defense Robert S. McNamara, I forgive our leaders of the Vietnam period.

I am able to forgive, not out of any great generosity of mine but because the passage of time and the actions of the Communist government of Vietnam proven to me we were fighting on the right side. In their harsh treatment of the Vietnamese people, in denying them medicine and essential consumer goods, and in persecuting religious practice, the Vietnamese Communists in the postwar years proved themselves to be—Communists.

The most eloquent comment on life under Ho Chi Minh's heirs was the flight of millions of Vietnamese who risked death on the high seas rather than live under that regime. If there was to be a trial to determine whether the Vietnam War was worth fighting, I would call the Boat People as my only witness.

Was the war worth the effort and sacrifice, or was it a mistake? Everyone touched by it must answer that question for himself. When I came home in 1969 and for many years afterward, I did not believe it was worth it. Today, with the passage of time and the experience of seeing both the benefits of freedom won by our sacrifice and the human destruction done by dictatorships, I believe the cause was just and the sacrifice not in vain.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.